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justice, asks for no new legislation on the relations of officers and crews. He does not even propose the abolition of corporal chastisement. He would have officers compelled to be reasonable and humane, by a sense of responsibility to their owners, and to a strict administration of existing laws at home ; but there is not a word in his volume tending to loose the bonds of a salutary discipline. In short, he has laid readers under obligation for a fund of instruction and amusement ; sailors, for impressively pleading their cause ; and owners and officers, quite as much as either, for maintaining their just authority.

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ART. IV. — *History of the United States from the Discovery of the American Continent*. BY GEORGE BANCROFT. Vol. III. Boston. Charles C. Little and James Brown. 8vo. pp. 468.

THE celebrated line of Bishop Berkeley,

“ Westward the course of empire takes its way,”

is too gratifying to national vanity, not to be often quoted, (though not always quoted right) ; and, if we look on it in the nature of a prediction, the completion of it not being limited to any particular time, it will not be easy to disprove it. Had the Bishop substituted “ freedom ” for “ empire ” it would be already fully justified by experience. It is indeed curious to observe, how steadily the progress of freedom, civil and religious, — of the enjoyment of those rights, which may be called the natural rights of humanity, — has gone on from east to west ; and how precisely the more or less liberal character of the social institutions of a country may be determined by its geographical position, as falling within the limits of one of the three quarters of the globe occupied wholly or in part by members of the great Caucasian family.

Thus, in Asia we find only far extended despotisms, in which but two relations are recognised, those of master and slave ; a solitary master, and a nation of slaves. No constitution exists there to limit his authority ; no intermediate body to counterbalance, or, at least, shield the people from its exercise. The people have no political existence. The monarch is literally the state. The religion of such countries

is of the same complexion with their government. The free spirit of Christianity, quickening and elevating the soul by the consciousness of its glorious destiny, made few proselytes there. But Mahometanism, with its doctrines of blind fatality, found ready favor with those who had already surrendered their wills, — their responsibility, — to an earthly master. In such countries, of course, there has been little progress in science. Ornamental arts, and even the literature of imagination, have been cultivated with various success ; but little has been done in those pursuits which depend on freedom of inquiry, and are connected with the best interests of humanity. The few monuments, of an architectural kind, that strike the traveller's eye, are the cold memorials of pomp and selfish vanity, not those of public spirit directed to enlarge the resources and civilization of an empire.

As we cross the boundaries into Europe, among the people of the same primitive stock, and under the same parallels, we may imagine ourselves transplanted to another planet. Man no longer grovels in the dust beneath a master's frown. He walks erect, as lord of the creation, his eyes raised to that heaven, to which his destinies call him. He is a free agent ; thinks, speaks, acts for himself ; enjoys the fruits of his own industry ; follows the career suited to his own genius and taste ; explores fearlessly the secrets of time and nature ; lives under laws which he has assisted in framing ; demands justice as his right, when those laws are invaded. In his freedom of speculation and action he has devised various forms of government. In most of them the monarchical principle is recognised ; but the power of the monarch is limited by written or customary rules. The people at large enter more or less into the exercise of government ; and a numerous aristocracy, interposed between them and the crown, secures them from the oppression of Eastern tyranny ; while this body itself is so far an improvement in the social organization, that the power instead of being concentrated in a single person, — plaintiff, judge, and executioner, — is distributed among a large number of different individuals and interests. This is a great advance, in itself, towards popular freedom.

The tendency, almost universal, is to advance still further. It is this war of opinion, — this contest between light and darkness, now going forward in most of the countries of Europe, — which furnishes the point of view from which their history is to be studied in the present, and, it may be, the fol-

lowing centuries. For, revolutions in society, when founded on opinion, — the only stable foundation, — the only foundation at which the friend of humanity does not shudder, — must be the slow work of time. And, who would wish the good cause to be so precipitated, that, in eradicating the old abuses which have interwoven themselves with every stone and pillar of the building, the noble building itself, which has so long afforded security to its inmates, should be laid in ruins? What is the best, what the worst form of government, in the abstract, may be matter of debate. But there can be no doubt, that the best will become the worst, to a people who blindly rush into it, without the preliminary training for comprehending and conducting it. Such transitions must, at least, cost the sacrifice of generations. And the patriotism must be singularly pure and abstract, which, at such cost, would purchase the possible, or even probable, good of a remote posterity. Various have been the efforts in the Old World at popular forms of government. But from some cause or other they have failed. And, however time, a wider intercourse, a greater familiarity with the practical duties of representation, and, not least of all, our own auspicious example, may prepare the European mind for the possession of republican freedom, it is very certain, that, at the present moment, Europe is not the place for republics.

The true soil for these is our own continent; the New World, the last of the three great geographical divisions, of which we have spoken. This is the spot on which the beautiful theories of the European philosopher, — who had risen to the full freedom of speculation, while action was controlled, — have been reduced to practice. The atmosphere here seems as fatal to the arbitrary institutions of the Old World, as that has been to the democratic forms of our own. It seems scarcely possible, that any other organization than these latter should exist here. In three centuries from the discovery of the country, the various races by which it is tenanted, some of them from the least liberal of the European monarchies, have, with few exceptions, come into the adoption of institutions of a republican character. Toleration, civil and religious, has been proclaimed, and enjoyed to an extent unknown since the world began, throughout the wide borders of this vast continent. Alas! for those portions which have assumed the exercise of these rights without fully compre-

hending their import ; who have been intoxicated with the fumes of freedom, instead of drawing nourishment from its living principle.

It was a fortunate, or, to speak more properly, a providential thing, that the discovery of the New World was postponed to the precise period when it occurred. Had it taken place at an earlier time, — during the flourishing period of the feudal ages, for example, — the old institutions of Europe, with their hallowed abuses, might have been ingrafted on this new stock, and, instead of the fruit of the tree of life, we should have furnished only varieties of a kind already far exhausted, and hastening to decay. But happily, some important discoveries in science, and, above all, the glorious Reformation, gave an electric shock to the intellect, long benumbed under the influence of a tyrannical priesthood. It taught men to distrust authority, to trace effects back to their causes, to search for themselves, and to take no guide but the reason which God had given them. It taught them to claim the right of free inquiry, as their inalienable birthright, and, with free inquiry, freedom of action. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were the period of the mighty struggle between the conflicting elements of religion, as the eighteenth and nineteenth have been that of the great contest for civil liberty.

It was in the midst of this universal ferment, and in consequence of it, that these shores were first peopled by our Puritan ancestors. Here they found a world where they might verify the value of those theories, which had been derided as visionary, or denounced as dangerous, in their own land. All around was free, free as nature herself. The mighty streams rolling on in their majesty, as they had continued to flow from the creation ; the forests, which no hand had violated, flourishing in primeval grandeur and beauty ; their only tenants the wild animals, or the Indians nearly as wild, scarcely held together by any tie of social polity. Nowhere was the trace of civilized man, or of his curious contrivances. Here was no Star-Chamber, nor Court of High Commission ; no racks, nor jails, nor gibbets ; no feudal tyrant to grind the poor man to the dust on which he toiled ; no Inquisition, to pierce into the thought, and to make thought a crime. The only eye that was upon them was the eye of Heaven.

True, indeed, in the first heats of suffering enthusiasm they did not extend that charity to others, which they claimed for

themselves. It was a blot on their characters, but one which they share in common with most reformers. The zeal requisite for great revolutions, whether in church or state, is rarely attended by charity for difference of opinion. Those, who are willing to do and to suffer bravely for their own doctrines, attach a value to them which makes them impatient of opposition from others. The martyr for conscience' sake cannot comprehend the necessity of leniency to those who denounce those truths for which he is prepared to lay down his own life. If he set so little value on his own, is it natural he should set more on that of others? The Dominican, who dragged his victims to the fires of the Inquisition in Spain, freely gave up his ease and his life to the duties of a missionary among the heathen. The Jesuits, who suffered martyrdom among the American savages in the propagation of their faith, stimulated those very savages in their horrid massacres of the Protestant settlements of New England. God has not often combined charity with enthusiasm. When he has done so, he has produced his noblest work ;—a More, or a Fenelon.

But, if the first settlers were intolerant in practice, they brought with them the living principle of freedom, which would survive, when their generation had passed away. They could not avoid it. For their coming here was, in itself, an assertion of that principle. They came for conscience' sake ; to worship God in their own way. Freedom of political institutions they at once avowed. Every citizen took his part in the political scheme, and enjoyed all the consideration of an equal participation in civil privileges ; and liberty in political matters gradually brought with it a corresponding liberty in religious concerns. In their subsequent contest with the mother country they learned a reason for their faith, and the best manner of defending it. Their liberties struck a deep root in the soil amidst storms, which shook, but could not prostrate them. It is this struggle with the mother country, this constant assertion of the right of self-government, this tendency, — feeble in its beginning, increasing with increasing age, — towards republican institutions, which connects the Colonial history with that of the Union, and forms the true point of view, from which it is to be regarded.

The history of this country naturally divides itself into three great periods ; the Colonial, when the idea of independence

was slowly and gradually ripening in the American mind ; the Revolutionary, when this idea was maintained by arms ; and that of the Union, when it was reduced to practice. The two first heads are now ready for the historian. The last is not yet ripe for him. Important contributions may be made to it, in the form of local narratives, personal biographies, political discussions, subsidiary documents, and *mémoires pour servir* ; but we are too near the strife, too much in the dust and mist of the parties, to have reached a point sufficiently distant and elevated to embrace the whole field of operations in one view, and paint it in its true colors and proportions, for the eye of posterity. We are, besides, too new as an independent nation, our existence has been too short, to satisfy the skepticism of those who distrust the perpetuity of our political institutions. They do not consider the problem, so important to humanity, as yet solved. Such skeptics are found, not only abroad, but at home. Not that the latter suppose the possibility of again returning to those forms of arbitrary government, which belong to the Old World. It would not be more chimerical to suspect the Emperor Nicholas, or Prince Metternich, or the citizen-king Louis-Philippe, of being republicans at heart, and sighing for a democracy, than to suspect the people of this country, (above all, of New England, the most thorough democracy in existence), — who have inherited republican principles and feelings from their ancestors, drawn them in with their mothers' milk, breathed the atmosphere of them from their cradle, participated in their equal rights and glorious privileges, — of foregoing their birthright, and falsifying their nature, so far as to acquiesce in any other than a popular form of government. But there are some skeptics, who, when they reflect on the fate of similar institutions in other countries ; when they see our sister states of South America, after nobly winning their independence, split up into insignificant fractions ; when they see the abuses, which, from time to time, have crept into our own administration, and the violence offered, in manifold ways, to the constitution ; when they see ambitious and able statesmen in one section of the country proclaiming principles, which must palsy the arm of the federal government, and urging the people of their own quarter to efforts for securing their independence of every other quarter ; — there are, we say, some wise and benevolent minds among us, who, seeing all this, feel

a natural distrust as to the stability of the federal compact, and consider the experiment as still in progress.

We, indeed, are not of that number, while we respect and feel the weight of their scruples. We sympathize fully in those feelings, those hopes, it may be, which animate the great mass of our countrymen. Hope is the attribute of republics. It should be peculiarly so of ours. Our fortune is all in the advance. We have no past, as compared with the nations of the Old World. Our existence is but a couple of centuries, dating from our embryo state ; our real existence as an independent people, little more than half a century. We are to look forward, then, and go forward ; not with vainglorious boasting, but with resolution and honest confidence. Boasting, indecorous in all, is peculiarly so in those, who take credit for the great things they are going to do, not those they have done. The glorification of an Englishman, or a Frenchman, with a long line of annals in his rear, may be offensive ; that of an American is ridiculous. But we may feel a just confidence from the past, that we shall be true to ourselves for the future ; that, to borrow a cant phrase of the day, we shall be true to our *mission*, — the most momentous ever intrusted to a nation ; that there is sufficient intelligence and moral principle in the people, if not always to choose the best rulers, at least, to right themselves by the ejection of bad ones, when they find they have been abused ; that they have intelligence enough to understand that their only consideration, their security as a nation, is in union ; that separation into smaller communities is the creation of so many hostile states ; that a large extent of empire, instead of being an evil, from embracing regions of irreconcilable local interests, is a benefit, since it affords the means of that commercial reciprocity, which makes the country, by its own resources, independent of every other ; and that the representatives drawn from these “ magnificent distances,” will, on the whole, be apt to legislate more independently, and on broader principles, than if occupied with the concerns of a petty state, where each legislator is swayed by the paltry factions of his own village. In all this we may honestly confide ; but our confidence will not pass for argument, will not be accepted as a solution of the problem. Time only can solve it ; and until the period has elapsed, which shall have fairly tested the strength of our institutions, through peace and



through war, through adversity and more trying prosperity, the time will not have come to write the history of the Union.

But still, results have been obtained sufficiently glorious to give great consideration to the two preliminary narratives, namely, of the Colonies, and the Revolution, which prepared the way for the Union. Indeed, without these results, they would both, however important in themselves, have lost much of their dignity and interest. Of these two narratives, the former, although less momentous than the latter, is most difficult to treat.

It is not that the historian is called on to pry into the dark recesses of antiquity, the twilight of civilization, mystifying and magnifying every object to the senses; nor to unravel some poetical mythology, hanging its metaphorical illusions around every thing in nature, mingling fact with fiction, the material with the spiritual, until the honest inquirer after truth may fold his arms in despair, before he can cry *εὐρηκα*; nor is he compelled to unroll musty, worm-eaten parchments, and dusty tomes in venerable black letter, of the good times of honest Caxton and Winken de Worde; nor to go about gleaning traditionary tales and ballads in some obsolete provincial *patois*. The record is plain and legible, and he need never go behind it. The antiquity of his story goes but little more than two centuries back; a very modern antiquity. The commencement of it was not in the dark ages, but in a period of illumination; an age yet glowing with the imagination of Shakspeare and Spenser, the philosophy of Bacon, the learning of Coke and of Hooker. The early passages of his story, — coeval with Hampden, and Milton, and Sydney, — belong to the times, in which the same struggle for the rights of conscience was going on in the land of our fathers, as in our own. There was no danger that the light of the Pilgrim should be hid under a bushel, or that there should be any dearth of chronicler or bard, — such as they were, — to record his sacrifice. And fortunate for us that it was so; since, in this way, every part of this great enterprise, from its conception to its consummation, is brought into the light of day. We are put in possession, not merely of the action, but of the motives which led to it, and, as to the character of the actors, are enabled to do justice to those, who, if we pronounce from their actions only, would seem not always careful to do justice to themselves.

The embarrassment of the Colonial history arises from the difficulty of obtaining a central point of interest, among so many petty states, each independent of the others ; and all, at the same time, so dependent on a foreign one, as to impair the historic dignity which attaches to great, powerful, and self-regulated communities. This embarrassment must be overcome by the author's detecting, and skilfully keeping before the reader, some great principle of action, if such exist, that may give unity and, at the same time, importance to the theme. Such a principle did exist in that tendency to independence, which, however feeble, till fanned by the breath of persecution into a blaze, was nevertheless the vivifying principle, as before remarked, of our ante-revolutionary annals.

Whoever has dipped much into historical reading is aware how few have succeeded in weaving an harmonious tissue from the motley and tangled skein of general history. The most fortunate illustration of this, within our recollection, is Sismondi's *Républiques Italiennes*, a work in sixteen volumes, in which the author has brought on the stage all the various governments of Italy for a thousand years, and in almost every variety of combination. Yet there is a pervading principle in this great mass of apparently discordant interests. That principle was the rise and decline of liberty. It is the key note to every revolution that occurs. It gives an harmonious tone to the many-colored canvass, which would else have offended by its glaring contrasts, and the startling violence of its transitions. The reader is interested, in spite of the transitions, but knows not the cause. This is the skill of a great artist. So true is this, that the same author has been able to concentrate what may be called the essence of his bulky history into a single volume, in which he confines himself to the developement of the animating principle of his narrative, stripped of all the superfluous accessories, under the significant title of "Rise, Progress, and Decline of Italian Freedom."

This embarrassment has not been easy to overcome by the writers of our Colonial annals. The first volume of Marshall's "Life of Washington" has great merit as a wise and comprehensive survey of this early period. But the plan is too limited to afford room for any thing like a satisfactory fullness of detail. The most thorough work, and incomparably the best on the subject, previous to the appearance of Mr.

Bancroft's, is the well-known history by Mr. Grahame, a truly valuable book, in which the author, though a foreigner, has shown himself capable of appreciating the motives, and comprehending the institutions, of our Puritan ancestors. He has spared no pains in the investigation of such original sources as were at his command ; and has conducted his inquiries with much candor, manifesting throughout the spirit of a scholar and a gentleman. It is not very creditable to his countrymen, that they should have received his labors with the apathy which he tells us they have, amidst the ocean of contemptible trash, with which their press is daily deluged. But, in truth, the Colonial and Revolutionary story of this country are themes too ungrateful to British ears, for us to be astonished at any insensibility on this score.

Mr. Grahame's work, however, with all its merit, is the work of a *foreigner*. And that word comprehends much that cannot be overcome by the best writer. He may produce a beautiful composition, faultless in style, accurate in the delineation of prominent events, full of sound logic, and most wise conclusions. But he cannot enter into the sympathies, comprehend all the minute feelings, prejudices, and peculiar ways of thinking, which form the idiosyncrasy of the nation. What can he know of these, who has never been warmed by the same sun, lingered among the same scenes, listened to the same tales in childhood, been pledged to the same interests in manhood, by which these fancies are nourished, — the loves, the hates, the hopes, the fears, that go to form national character ? Write as he will, he is still an alien, speaking a tongue, in which the nation will detect the foreign accent. He may produce a book without a blemish in the eyes of foreigners. It may even contain much for the instruction of the native, that he would not be likely to find in his own literature. But it will afford evidence, on every page, of its exotic origin. Botta's "History of the War of the Revolution," is the best treatise yet compiled of that event. It is, as every one knows, a most classical and able work, doing justice to the great heroes and actions of the period. But, we will venture to say, no well-informed American ever turned over its leaves, without feeling that the writer was not nourished among the men and the scenes he is painting. With all its great merits, it cannot be, — at least for Americans, — *the* history of the Revolution.

It is the same as in portrait-painting. The artist may catch the prominent lineaments, the complexion, the general air, the peculiar costume of his subject ; all that a stranger's eye will demand. But he must not hope, unless he has had much previous intimacy with the sitter, to transfer those fleeting shades of expression, the almost imperceptible play of features, which are revealed to the eye of his own family.

Who would think of looking to a Frenchman for a history of England ; to an Englishman for the best history of France ? Ill fares it with the nation that cannot find writers of genius to tell its own story. What foreign hand could have painted, like Herodotus and Thucydides, the achievements of the Greeks ? Who, like Livy and Tacitus, have portrayed the shifting character of the Roman, in his rise, meridian, and decline ? Had the Greeks trusted their story to these same Romans, what would have been their fate with posterity ? Let the Carthaginians tell. All that remains of this nation, the proud rival of Rome, who once divided with her the empire of the Mediterranean, and surpassed her in commerce and civilization, — nearly all that now remains, to indicate her character, is a poor proverb, — *Punica fides*, a brand of infamy given by the Roman historian ; and one which the Romans merited probably as richly as the Carthaginians. Yet America, it is too true, must go to Italy for the best history of the Revolution, and to Scotland for the best history of the Colonies. Happily, the work before us bids fair, when completed, to supply this deficiency. And it is quite time we should turn to it.

Mr. Bancroft's first two volumes have been too long before the public to require any thing to be now said of them. Indeed, the first has already been the subject of a particular notice in this Journal.\* These volumes are mainly occupied with the settlement of the country by the different colonies, and the institutions gradually established among them, with a more particular illustration of the remarkable features in their character or policy.

In the present volume the immediate point of view is somewhat changed. It was no longer necessary to treat each of the colonies separately, and a manifest advantage in respect to unity is gained by their being brought more under one aspect.

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\* See *North American Review*, Vol. XL. pp. 99 *et seq.*

A more prominent feature is gradually developed by the relations with the mother country. This is the mercantile system, as it is called by economical writers, which distinguishes the colonial policy of modern Europe from that of ancient. The great object of this system was to get as much profit from the colonies, with as little cost to the mother country, as possible. The former, instead of being regarded as an integral part of the empire, were held as property ; to be dealt with for the benefit of the proprietors. This was the great object of legislation, almost the sole one. The system, so different from any thing known in antiquity, was introduced by the Spaniards and Portuguese, and by them carried to an extent, which no other nation has cared to follow. By the most cruel and absurd system of prohibitory legislation, their colonies were cut off from intercourse with all but the parent country. And as the latter was unable to supply their demands for even the necessities of life, an extensive contraband trade was introduced, which, without satisfying the wants of the colonies, corrupted their morals. It is an old story, and the present generation has witnessed the results, in the ruin of those fine countries, and the final assertion of their independence, which the degraded condition, in which they had been held, has wholly unfitted them to enjoy.

The English government was too wise and liberal to press thus heavily on its transatlantic subjects. But the policy was similar, consisting, as is well known, and is ably delineated in these volumes, of a long series of restrictive measures, tending to cramp their free trade, manufactures, and agriculture, and to secure the commercial monopoly of Great Britain. This is the point, from which events in the present volume are to be more immediately contemplated, all subordinate, like those in the preceding, to that leading principle of a republican tendency,—the centre of attraction, controlling the movements of the numerous satellites in our colonial system.

The introductory chapter in the volume opens with a view of the English Revolution in 1688, which, though not popular, is rightly characterized as leading the way to popular liberty. Its great object was the security of property ; and our author has traced its operation, in connexion with the gradual progress of commercial wealth, to give greater authority to the mercantile system. We select the following original sketch of the character of William the Third.

“The character of the new monarch of Great Britain could mould its policy, but not its constitution. True to his purposes, he yet wins no sympathy. In political sagacity, in force of will, far superior to the English statesmen who envired him ; more tolerant than his ministers or his parliaments, the childless man seems like the unknown character in algebra, which is introduced to form the equation, and dismissed when the problem is solved. In his person thin and feeble, with eyes of a hectic lustre, of a temperament inclining to the melancholic, in conduct cautious, of a self-relying humor, with abiding impressions respecting men, he sought no favor, and relied for success on his own inflexibility and the greatness and maturity of his designs. Too wise to be cajoled, too firm to be complaisant, no address could sway his resolve. In Holland, he had not scrupled to derive an increased power from the crimes of rioters and assassins ; in England, no filial respect diminished the energy of his ambition. His exterior was chilling ; yet he had a passionate delight in horses and the chase. In conversation he was abrupt, speaking little and slowly, and with repulsive dryness ; in the day of battle, he was all activity, and the highest energy of life, without kindling his passions, animated his frame. His trust in Providence was so connected with faith in general laws, that, in every action, he sought the principle which should range it on an absolute decree. Thus, unconscious to himself, he had sympathy with the people, who always have faith in Providence. ‘Do you dread death in my company ?’ he cried to the anxious sailors, when the ice on the coast of Holland had almost crushed the boat that was bearing him to the shore. Courage and pride pervaded the reserve of the prince, who, spurning an alliance with a bastard daughter of Louis XIV., had made himself the centre of a gigantic opposition to France. For England, for the English people, for English liberties, he had no affection, indifferently employing the Whigs, who found their pride in the Revolution, and the Tories, who had opposed his elevation, and who yet were the fittest instruments ‘to carry the prerogative high.’ One great passion had absorbed his breast, — the independence of his native country. The harsh encroachments of Louis XIV., which, in 1672, had made William of Orange a revolutionary stadtholder, now assisted to constitute him a revolutionary king, transforming the impassive champion of Dutch independence into the defender of the liberties of Europe.” — Vol. III. pp. 2 – 4.

The chapter proceeds to examine the relations, not always of the most friendly aspect, between England and the

Colonies, in which Mr. Bancroft pays a well-merited tribute to the enlightened policy of Penn, and the tranquillity he secured to his settlement. At the close of the chapter is an account of that lamentable, — farce, we should have called it, had it not had so tragic a conclusion, — the Salem witchcraft.

Our author has presented some very striking sketches of these deplorable scenes, in which poor human nature appears in as humiliating a plight as would be possible in a civilized country. The Inquisition, fierce as it was, and most unrelenting in its persecutions, had something in it respectable in comparison with this wretched and imbecile self-delusion. The historian does not shrink from distributing his censure, in full measure, to those, to whom he thinks it belongs. The erudite divine, Cotton Mather, in particular, would feel little pleasure in the contemplation of the portrait sketched for him on this occasion. Vanity, according to Mr. Bancroft, was quite as active an incentive to his movements, as religious zeal. And, if he began with the latter, there seems no reason to doubt, that pride of opinion, an unwillingness to expose his error, so humiliating, to the world, perhaps even to his own heart, were powerful stimulants to his continuing the course he had begun, though others faltered in it.

Mr. Bancroft has taken some pains to show, that the prosecutions were conducted before magistrates not appointed by the people, but the crown ; and that a stop was not put to them till after the meeting of the representatives of the people. This, in our view, is a distinction somewhat fanciful. The judges held their commissions from the governor ; and, if he was appointed by the crown, it was, as our author admits, at the suggestion of Increase Mather, a minister of the people. The accusers, the witnesses, the jurors were all taken from the people. And, when a stop was put to further proceedings by the seasonable delay interposed by the General Court, before the assembling of the "legal Colonial" tribunal (thus giving time for the illusion to subside), it was, in part, from the apprehension that, in the rising tide of accusation, no man, however elevated might be his character or condition, would be safe.

In the following chapter, after a full exposition of the prominent features in the system of commercial monopoly, which controlled the affairs of the colonies, we are introduced

to the great discoveries in the northern and western regions of the continent, made by the Jesuit missionaries of France. Nothing is more extraordinary in the history of this remarkable order, than their bold enterprise in spreading their faith over this boundless wilderness, in defiance of the most appalling obstacles which man and nature could present. Faith and zeal triumphed over all ; and, combined with science and the spirit of adventure, laid open unknown regions in the heart of this vast continent, then roamed over by the buffalo and the savage, and now alive with the busy hum of an industrious and civilized population.

The historian has diligently traced the progress of the missionaries in their journeys into the western territory of Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, down the deep basin of the Mississippi, to its mouth. He has identified the scenes of some striking events in the history of discovery, as, among others, the place where Marquette first met the Illinois tribe, at Iowa. No preceding writer has brought into view the results of these labors in a compass which may be embraced, as it were, in a single glance. The character of this order, and their fortune, form one of the most remarkable objects for contemplation in the history of man. Springing up, as it were, to prop the crumbling edifice of Catholicism, when it was reeling under the first shock of the Reformation, it took up its residence, indifferently, within the precincts of palaces, or in the boundless plains and forests of the wilderness ; held the consciences of civilized monarchs in its keeping, and directed their counsels, while, at the same time, it was gathering barbarian nations under its banners, and pouring the light of civilization into the furthest and darkest quarters of the globe.

“ The establishment of ‘ the Society of Jesus,’ ” says Mr. Bancroft, “ by Loyola had been contemporary with the Reformation, of which it was designed to arrest the progress ; and its complete organization belongs to the period when the first full edition of Calvin’s ‘ Institutes ’ saw the light. Its members were, by its rules, never to become prelates, and could gain power and distinction only by influence over mind. Their vows were, poverty, chastity, absolute obedience, and a constant readiness to go on missions against heresy or heathenism. Their cloisters became the best schools in the world. Emanipated, in a great degree, from the forms of piety, separated



from domestic ties, constituting a community essentially intellectual as well as essentially plebeian, bound together by the most perfect organization, and having for their end a control over opinion among the scholars and courts of Europe and throughout the habitable globe, the order of the Jesuits held, as its ruling maxims, the widest diffusion of its influence, and the closest internal unity. Immediately on its institution, their missionaries, kindling with a heroism that defied every danger and endured every toil, made their way to the ends of the earth; they raised the emblem of man's salvation on the Moluccas, in Japan, in India, in Thibet, in Cochin-China, and in China; they penetrated Ethiopia, and reached the Abyssinians; they planted missions among the Caffres: in California, on the banks of the Marañhon, in the plains of Paraguay, they invited the wildest of barbarians to the civilization of Christianity."

"Religious enthusiasm," he adds, "colonized New England; and religious enthusiasm founded Montreal, made a conquest of the wilderness on the upper Lakes, and explored the Mississippi. Puritanism gave New England its worship, and its schools; the Roman church created for Canada its altars, its hospitals, and its seminaries. The influence of Calvin can be traced to every New England village; in Canada, the monuments of feudalism and the Catholic church stand side by side; and the names of Montmorenci and Bourbon, of Levi and Conde, are mingled with memorials of St. Athanasius and Augustin, of St. Francis of Assisi, and Ignatius Loyola." — *Ibid.*, pp. 120, 121.

We hardly know which to select from the many brilliant and spirited sketches, in which this part of the story abounds. None has more interest, on the whole, than the discovery of the Mississippi by Marquette and his companions, and the first voyage of the white men down its majestic waters.

"Behold, then, in 1673, on the tenth day of June, the meek, single-hearted, unpretending, illustrious Marquette, with Joliet for his associate, five Frenchmen as his companions, and two Algonquins as guides, lifting their two canoes on their backs, and walking across the narrow portage that divides the Fox River from the Winconsin. They reach the water-shed; uttering a special prayer to the immaculate Virgin, they leave the streams that, flowing onwards, could have borne their greetings to the castle of Quebec; — already they stand by the Wisconsin. 'The guides returned,' says the gentle Marquette, 'leaving us alone, in this unknown land, in the hands of Providence.' France and Christianity stood in the valley of

the Mississippi. Embarking on the broad Wisconsin, the discoverers, as they sailed west, went solitarily down the stream, between alternate prairies and hill-sides, beholding neither man nor the wonted beasts of the forest : no sound broke the appalling silence, but the ripple of their canoe, and the lowing of the buffalo. In seven days, ' they entered happily the Great River, with a joy that could not be expressed ' ; and the two birch-bark canoes, raising their happy sails under new skies and to unknown breezes, floated gently down the calm magnificence of the ocean stream, over the broad, clear sand-bars, the resort of innumerable waterfowl, — gliding past islands that swelled from the bosom of the stream, with their tufts of massive thickets, and between the wide plains of Illinois and Iowa, all garlanded as they were with majestic forests, or checkered by island grove and the open vastness of the prairie.

" About sixty leagues below the mouth of the Wisconsin, the western bank of the Mississippi bore on its sands the trail of men ; a little foot-path was discerned leading into a beautiful prairie ; and, leaving the canoes, Joliet and Marquette resolved alone to brave a meeting with the savages. After walking six miles, they beheld a village on the banks of a river, and two others on a slope, at a distance of a mile and a half from the first. The river was the Mou-in-gou-e-na, or Moingona, of which we have corrupted the name into Des Moines. Marquette and Joliet were the first white men who trod the soil of Iowa. Commending themselves to God, they uttered a loud cry. The Indians hear ; four old men advance slowly to meet them, bearing the peace-pipe brilliant with many-colored plumes. ' We are Illinois,' said they ; that is, when translated, ' We are men ' ; and they offered the calumet. An aged chief received them at his cabin with upraised hands, exclaiming, ' How beautiful is the sun, Frenchman, when thou comest to visit us ! Our whole village awaits thee ; thou shalt enter in peace into all our dwellings.' And the pilgrims were followed by the devouring gaze of an astonished crowd.

" At the great council, Marquette published to them the one true God, their Creator. He spoke, also, of the great captain of the French, the Governor of Canada, who had chastised the Five Nations and commanded peace ; and he questioned them respecting the Mississippi and the tribes that possessed its banks. For the messengers, who announced the subjection of the Iroquois, a magnificent festival was prepared of hominy, and fish, and the choicest viands from the prairies.

" After six days' delay, and invitations to new visits, the chieftain of the tribe, with hundreds of warriors, attended the strangers to their canoes ; and, selecting a peace-pipe embel-

lished with the head and neck of brilliant birds, and all feathered over with plumage of various hues, they hung round Marquette the mysterious arbiter of peace and war, the sacred calumet, a safeguard among the nations.

“The little group proceeded onwards. ‘I did not fear death,’ says Marquette; ‘I should have esteemed it the greatest happiness to have died for the glory of God.’ They passed the perpendicular rocks, which wore the appearance of monsters; they heard at a distance the noise of the waters of the Missouri, known to them by the Algonquin name of Peki-tanoni; and, when they came to the most beautiful confluence of waters in the world, — where the swifter Missouri rushes like a conqueror into the calmer Mississippi, dragging it, as it were, hastily to the sea, — the good Marquette resolved in his heart, anticipating Lewis and Clarke, one day to ascend the mighty river to its source; to cross the ridge that divides the oceans, and, descending a westerly flowing stream, to publish the gospel to all the people of this New World.

“In a little less than forty leagues, the canoes floated past the Ohio, which was then, and long afterwards, called the Wabash. Its banks were tenanted by numerous villages of the peaceful Shawnees, who quailed under the incursions of the Iroquois.

“The thick canes begin to appear so close and strong, that the buffalo could not break through them; the insects become intolerable; as a shelter against the suns of July, the sails are folded into an awning. The prairies vanish; thick forests of whitewood, admirable for their vastness and height, crowd even to the skirts of the pebbly shore. It is also observed, that, in the land of the Chickasas, the Indians have guns.

“Near the latitude of thirty-three degrees, on the western bank of the Mississippi, stood the village of Mitchigamea, in a region that had not been visited by Europeans since the days of De Soto. ‘Now,’ thought Marquette, ‘we must, indeed, ask the aid of the Virgin.’ Armed with bows and arrows, with clubs, axes, and bucklers, amidst continual whoops, the natives, bent on war, embark in vast canoes made out of the trunks of hollow trees; but, at the sight of the mysterious peace-pipe held aloft, God touched the hearts of the old men, who checked the impetuosity of the young; and, throwing their bows and quivers into the canoes, as a token of peace, they prepared a hospitable welcome.

“The next day, a long, wooden canoe, containing ten men, escorted the discoverers, for eight or ten leagues, to the village of Akansea, the limit of their voyage. They had left the region of the Algonquins, and, in the midst of the Sioux and

Chickasas, could speak only by an interpreter. A half league above Akansea, they were met by two boats, in one of which stood the commander, holding in his hand the peace-pipe, and singing as he drew near. After offering the pipe, he gave bread of maize. The wealth of his tribe consisted in buffalo skins ; their weapons were axes of steel, — a proof of commerce with Europeans.

“ Thus had our travellers descended below the entrance of the Arkansas, to the genial climes that have almost no winter but rains, beyond the bound of the Huron and Algonquin languages, to the vicinity of the Gulf of Mexico, and to tribes of Indians that had obtained European arms by traffic with Spaniards or with Virginia.

“ So, having spoken of God, and the mysteries of the Catholic faith ; having become certain that the Father of Rivers went not to the ocean east of Florida, nor yet to the Gulf of California, Marquette and Joliet left Akansea, and ascended the Mississippi.

“ At the thirty eighth degree of latitude, they entered the River Illinois, and discovered a country without its paragon for the fertility of its beautiful prairies, covered with buffaloes and stags, — for the loveliness of its rivulets, and the prodigal abundance of wild duck and swans, and of a species of parrots and wild turkeys. The tribe of Illinois, that tenanted its banks, entreated Marquette to come and reside among them. One of their chiefs, with their young men, conducted the party, by way of Chicago, to Lake Michigan ; and, before the end of September, all were safe in Green Bay

“ Joliet returned to Quebec to announce the discovery, of which the fame, through Talon, quickened the ambition of Colbert ; the unaspiring Marquette remained to preach the gospel to the Miamis, who dwelt in the north of Illinois, round Chicago. Two years afterwards, sailing from Chicago to Mackinaw, he entered a little river in Michigan. Erecting an altar, he said mass after the rites of the Catholic church ; then, begging the men who conducted his canoe to leave him alone for a half hour,

‘ in the darkling wood,  
Amidst the cool and silence, he knelt down,  
And offered to the Mightiest solemn thanks  
And supplication.’

At the end of the half hour, they went to seek him, and he was no more. The good missionary, discoverer of a world, had fallen asleep on the margin of the stream that bears his name. Near its mouth, the canoemen dug his grave in the sand. Ever after, the forest rangers, if in danger on Lake

Michigan, would invoke his name. The people of the west will build his monument." — *Ibid.*, pp. 157 – 162.

The list of heroic adventurers in the path of discovery is closed by La Salle, the chivalrous Frenchman, of whom we have made particular record in a previous number of this Journal ; \* and whose tremendous journey from the Illinois to the French settlements in Canada, a distance of fifteen hundred miles, is also noticed by Mr. Bancroft. His was the first European bark that emerged from the mouth of the Mississippi, and Mr. Bancroft, as he notices the event, and the feelings it gave rise to in the mind of the discoverer, gives utterance to his own, in language truly sublime.

"As he raised the cross by the Arkansas ; as he planted the arms of France near the Gulf of Mexico ; — he anticipated the future affluence of emigrants, and heard in the distance the footsteps of the advancing multitude that were coming to take possession of the valley." — *Ibid.*, p. 168.

This descent of the Great River, our author places, without hesitation, in 1682, being a year earlier than the one assigned by us in the article referred to.† Mr. Bancroft is so familiar with the whole ground, and has studied the subject so carefully, that great weight is due to his opinions. But he has not explained the precise authority for his conclusions in this particular.

This leads us to enlarge on what we consider a defect in our author's present plan. His notes are discarded altogether, and his references transferred from the bottom of the page to the side margin. This is very objectionable, not merely on account of the disagreeable effect produced on the eye, but from the more serious inconvenience of want of room for very frequent and accurate reference. Titles are necessarily much abridged, sometimes at the expense of perspicuity. The first reference in this volume is "Hallam, IV. 374." The second is "Archdale." Now Hallam has written several works, published in various forms and editions. As to the second authority, we have no means of identifying the passage at all. This, however, is not the habit of Mr. Bancroft where the fact is of any great moment ; and his references throughout are abundant. But the practice of references in the side margin, though warranted by high authority, is unfavorable, from want of room, for very frequent or very minute specification.

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\* See *North American Review*, Vol. XLVIII. pp. 69 *et seq.*

† *Ibid.*, pp. 84, 85.

The omission of notes we consider a still greater evil. It is true they lead to great abuses, are often the vehicle of matter which should have been incorporated in the text, more frequently of irrelevant matter, which should not have been admitted anywhere ; and thus exhaust the reader's patience, while they spoil the effect of the work by drawing the attention from the continuous flow of the narrative, checking the heat that is raised by it in the reader's mind, and not unfrequently jarring on his feelings by some misplaced witticism, or smart attempt at one. For these and the like reasons, many competent critics have pronounced against the use of notes, considering that a writer, who could not bring all he had to say into the compass of his text, was a bungler. Gibbon, who practised the contrary, intimates a regret in one of his letters, that he had been overruled so far as to allow his notes to be printed at the bottom of the page, instead of being removed to the end of the volume. But from all this we dissent, especially in reference to a work of research like the present History. We are often desirous here to have the assertion of the author, or the sentiment quoted by him, if important, verified by the original extract, especially when this is in a foreign language ; we want to see the grounds of his conclusions, the scaffolding by which he has raised his structure ; to estimate the true value of his authorities ; to know something of their characters, positions in society, and the probable influences to which they were exposed. Where there is contradiction, we want to see it stated ; the *pros* and the *cons*, and the grounds for rejecting this, and admitting that. We want to have a reason for our faith. Otherwise, we are merely led blindfold. Our guide may be an excellent guide ; he may have travelled over the path till it has become a beaten track to him ; but, we like to use our own eyesight too, to observe somewhat for ourselves, and to know, if possible, why he has taken this particular road, in preference to that which his predecessors have travelled.

The objections made to notes are founded rather on the abuse, than the proper use of them. Gibbon only wished to remove his own to the end of his volume. Though in this we think he erred, from the difficulty and frequent disappointment which the reader must have experienced in consulting them ; a disappointment of little moment when unattended by difficulty. But Gibbon knew too well the worth of this

part of his labors to him, to wish to discard them altogether. He knew his reputation stood on them as intimately as on his narrative. Indeed, they supply a body of criticism and well selected, well digested learning, which, of itself, would make the reputation of any scholar. Many accomplished writers, however, and Mr. Bancroft among the number, have come to a different conclusion. And he has formed his, probably, with deliberation, having made the experiment in both forms.

Indeed, the fulness of the extracts from original sources, with which his text is inlaid, giving such life and presence to it, and the frequency of his references, supersede much of the necessity of notes. We should have been very glad of one, however, of the kind we are speaking of, at the close of his expedition of La Salle.

We have no room for the discussion of the topics in the next chapter, relating to the hostilities for the acquisition of colonial territory between France and England, each of them pledged to the same system of commercial monopoly ; but must pass to the author's account of the Aborigines east of the Mississippi. In this division of his subject, he brings into view the geographical positions of the numerous tribes ; their languages, social institutions, religious faith, and probable origin. All these copious topics are brought within the compass of a hundred pages ; arranged with great harmony, and exhibited with perspicuity and singular richness of expression. It is, on the whole, the most elaborate and finished portion of the volume.

His remarks on the localities of the tribes, instead of a barren muster-roll of names, are constantly enlivened by picturesque details connected with their situation. His strictures on their various languages are conceived in a philosophical spirit. The subject is one that has already employed the pens of the ablest philologists in this country, among whom it is only necessary to mention the names of Du Ponceau, Pickering, and Gallatin. Our author has evidently bestowed much labor and thought on the topic. He examines the peculiar structure of the languages, which, though radically different, bear a common resemblance in their compounded and synthetic organization. He has omitted to notice the singular exception to the polysynthetic formation of the Indian languages presented by the Otomie, which has afforded a Mexican philologist so ingenious a parallel, in its structure, with the

Chinese. Mr. Bancroft concludes his review of them by admitting the copiousness of their combinations, and by inferring that this copiousness is no evidence of care and cultivation, but the elementary form of expression of a rude and uncivilized people ; in proof of which, he cites the example of the partially civilized Indian in accommodating his idiom gradually to the analytic structure of the European languages. May not this be explained by the circumstance, that the influence under which he makes this, like his other changes, is itself European ? But we pass to a more popular theme, the religious faith of the red man, whose fanciful superstitions are depicted by our author with highly poetical coloring.

“ The red man, unaccustomed to generalization, obtained no conception of an absolute substance, of a self-existent being, but saw a divinity in every power. Wherever there was being, motion, or action, there to him was a spirit ; and, in a special manner, wherever there appeared singular excellence among beasts, or birds, or in the creation, there to him was the presence of a divinity. When he feels his pulse throb, or his heart beat, he knows that it is a spirit. A god resides in the flint, to give forth the kindling, cheering fire ; a spirit resides in the mountain cliff ; a spirit makes its abode in the cool recesses of the grottoes which nature has adorned ; a god dwells in each ‘ little grass ’ that springs miraculously from the earth. ‘ The woods, the wilds, and the waters, respond to savage intelligence ; the stars and the mountains live ; the river, and the lake, and the waves, have a spirit.’ Every hidden agency, every mysterious influence, is personified. A god dwells in the sun, and in the moon, and in the firmament ; the spirit of the morning reddens in the eastern sky ; a deity is present in the ocean and in the fire ; the crag that overhangs the river has its genius ; there is a spirit to the waterfall ; a household god dwells in the Indian’s wigwam, and consecrates his home ; spirits climb upon the forehead, to weigh down the eyelids in sleep. Not the heavenly bodies only, the sky is filled with spirits that minister to man. To the savage, divinity, broken, as it were, into an infinite number of fragments, fills all place and all being. The idea of unity in the creation may exist contemporaneously ; but it existed only in the germ, or as a vague belief derived from the harmony of the universe. Yet faith in the Great Spirit, when once presented, was promptly seized and appropriated, and so infused itself into the heart of remotest tribes, that it came to be often considered as a portion of their original faith. Their shadowy aspirations and creeds



assumed, through the reports of missionaries, a more complete developement ; and a religious system was elicited from the pregnant but rude materials." — *Ibid.*, pp. 285, 286.

The following pictures of the fate of the Indian infant, and the shadowy pleasures of the land of spirits, have, also, much tenderness and beauty.

"The same motive prompted them to bury with the warrior his pipe and his manitou, his tomahawk, quiver, and bow ready bent for action, and his most splendid apparel ; to place by his side his bowl, his maize, and his venison, for the long journey to the country of his ancestors. Festivals in honor of the dead were also frequent, when a part of the food was given to the flames, that so it might serve to nourish the departed. The traveller would find in the forests a dead body placed on a scaffold erected upon piles, carefully wrapped in bark for its shroud, and attired in warmest furs. If a mother lost her babe, she would cover it with bark, and envelope it anxiously in the softest beaver-skins ; at the burial-place, she would put by its side its cradle, its beads, and its rattles ; and, as a last service of maternal love, would draw milk from her bosom in a cup of bark, and burn it in the fire, that her infant might still find nourishment on its solitary journey to the land of shades. Yet the new-born babe would be buried, not, as usual, on a scaffold, but by the wayside, that so its spirit might secretly steal into the bosom of some passing matron, and be born again under happier auspices. On burying her daughter, the Chippewa mother adds, not snow-shoes, and beads, and moccasins, only, but (sad emblem of woman's lot in the wilderness !) the carrying-belt and the paddle. 'I know my daughter will be restored to me,' she once said, as she clipped a lock of hair as a memorial ; 'by this lock of hair I shall discover her, for I shall take it with me,' — alluding to the day when she, too, with her carrying-belt and paddle, and the little relic of her child, should pass through the grave to the dwelling-place of her ancestors."

"The faith, as well as the sympathies, of the savage descended also to inferior things. Of each kind of animal they say there exists one, the source and origin of all, of a vast size, the type and original of the whole class. From the immense invisible beaver come all the beavers, by whatever run of water they are found ; the same is true of the elk and buffalo, of the eagle and robin, of the meanest quadruped of the forest, of the smallest insect that buzzes in the air. There lives for each class of animals this invisible, vast type, or elder brother. Thus the savage established his right to be classed by philoso-

phers in the rank of realists ; and his chief effort at generalization was a reverent exercise of the religious sentiment. Where these older brothers dwell, they do not exactly know ; yet it may be that the giant manitous, which are brothers to beasts, are hid beneath the waters, and that those of the birds make their homes in the blue sky. But the Indian believes also, of each individual animal, that it possesses the mysterious, the indestructible principle of life ; there is not a breathing thing but has its shade, which never can perish. Regarding himself, in comparison with other animals, but as the first among coördinate existences, he respects the brute creation, and assigns to it, as to himself, a perpetuity of being. ‘ The ancients of these lands ’ believed that the warrior, when released from life, renews the passions and activity of this world ; is seated once more among his friends ; shares again the joyous feast ; walks through shadowy forests, that are alive with the spirits of birds ; and there, in his paradise,

“ ‘ By midnight moons, o’er moistening dews,  
In vestments for the chase arrayed,  
The hunter still the deer pursues, —  
The hunter and the deer a shade.’ ”

*Ibid.*, pp. 295, 298.

At the close of this chapter, the historian grapples with the much-vexed question respecting the origin of the Aborigines, — that *pons asinorum*, which has called forth so much sense, and nonsense, on both sides of the water ; and will continue to do so, as long as a new relic, or unknown hieroglyphic, shall turn up, to irritate the nerves of the antiquary.

Mr. Bancroft passes briefly in review the several arguments adduced in favor of the connexion with Eastern Asia. He lays no stress on the affinity of languages, or of customs and religious notions ; considering these as spontaneous expressions of similar ideas and wants, in similar conditions of society. He attaches as little value to the resemblance established by Humboldt, between the signs of the Mexican calendar, and those of the signs of the zodiac in Thibet and Tartary ; and, as for the far-famed Dighton Rock, and the learned lucubrations thereon, he sets them down as so much moonshine, pronouncing the characters Algonquin. The *tumuli*, — the great tumuli of the West, — he regards as the work of no mortal hand, except so far as they have been excavated for a sepulchral purpose. He admits, however, vestiges of a migratory movement on our continent, from the northeast to the southwest ; shows very satisfactorily, by es-

timating the distances of the intervening islands, the practicability of a passage, in the most ordinary sea-boat, from the Asiatic to the American shores, in the high latitudes ; and, by a comparison of the Indian and Mongolian skulls, comes to the conclusion that the two races are probably identical in origin. But the epoch of their divergence he places at so remote a period, that the peculiar habits, institutions, and culture of the Aborigines must be regarded as all their own, — as indigenous. This is the outline of his theory.

By this hypothesis he extricates the question from the embarrassment caused by the ignorance which the Aborigines have manifested in the use of iron, milk, &c., known to the Mongol hordes, but which he, of course, supposes were not known, at the time of the migration. This is carrying the exodus back to a far period. But the real objection seems to be, that, by thus rejecting all evidence of communication but that founded on anatomical resemblance, he has unnecessarily narrowed the basis on which it rests. The resemblance between a few specimens of Mongolian and American skulls is a narrow basis, indeed, taken as the only one, for so momentous a theory.

In fact, this particular point of analogy does not strike us as, by any means, the most powerful of the arguments in favor of a communication with the East ; when we consider the small number of the specimens, on which it is founded, the great variety of formation in individuals of the same family, — some of the specimens approaching even nearer to the Caucasian than the Mongolian, — and the very uniform deviation from the latter, in the prominence, and the greater angularity, of the features.

This connexion with the East derives, in our judgment, some support, feeble though it be, from affinities of language ; but this is a field which remains to be much more fully explored. The analogy is much more striking of certain usages and institutions, particularly of a religious character, and, above all, the mythological traditions, which those who have had occasion to look into the Aztec antiquities cannot fail to be struck with. This resemblance is oftentimes in matters so purely arbitrary, that it can hardly be regarded as founded in the constitution of man ; so very exact that it can scarcely be considered as accidental. We give up the Dighton Rock, that rock of offence to so many antiquaries, who

may read in it the hand-writing of the Phœnicians, Egyptians, or Scandinavians, quite as well as any thing else. Indeed, the various *fac-similes* of it, made for the benefit of the learned, are so different from one another, that, like Sir Hudibras, one may find in it

“ A leash of languages, at once.”

We are agreed with our author, that it is very good Algonquin. But the zodiac, the Tartar zodiac, which M. de Humboldt has so well shown to resemble, in its terms, those of the Aztec calendar, we cannot so easily surrender. The striking coincidence established by his investigations between the astronomical signs of the two nations, — in a similar corresponding series, moreover, although applied to different uses, — is, in our opinion, one of the most powerful arguments yet adduced for the affinity of the two races. Nor is Mr. Bancroft wholly right in supposing that the Asiatic hieroglyphics referred only to the zodiac. Like the Mexican, they also presided over the years, days, and even hours. The strength of evidence, founded on numerous analogies, cannot be shown, without going into details, for which there is scarce room in the compass of a separate article, much less in the heel of one. Whichever way we turn, the subject is full of perplexity. It is the sphinx's riddle, and the Œdipus must be called from the grave who is to solve it.

In closing our remarks, we must express our satisfaction, that the favorable notice we took of Mr. Bancroft's labors, on his first appearance, has been fully ratified by his countrymen, and that his Colonial History establishes his title to a place among the great historical writers of the age. The reader will find the pages of the present volume filled with matter not less interesting and important than the preceding. He will meet with the same brilliant and daring style, the same picturesque sketches of character and incident, the same acute reasoning, and compass of erudition.

In the delineation of events, Mr. Bancroft has been guided by the spirit of historic faith. Not that it would be difficult to discern the color of his politics; nor, indeed, would it be possible for any one strongly pledged to any set of principles, whether in politics or religion, to disguise them in the discussion of abstract topics, without being false to himself, and giving a false tone to the picture. But, while he is true to himself, he has an equally imperative

duty to perform, — to be true to others, to those on whose characters and conduct he sits in judgment as an historian. No pet theory, nor party predilections, can justify him in swerving one hair's breadth from truth in his delineation of the mighty dead, whose portraits he is exhibiting to us on the canvass of history.

Whenever religion is introduced, Mr. Bancroft has shown a commendable spirit of liberality. Catholics and Calvinists, Jesuits, Quakers, and Church-of-England men, are all judged according to their deeds, and not their speculative tenets. And, even in the latter particular, he generally contrives to find something deserving of admiration, some commendable doctrine or aspiration, in most of them. And what Christian sect, we might add, what sect of any denomination is there, which has not some beauty of doctrine to admire? Religion is the homage of man to his Creator. The forms in which it is expressed are infinitely various; but they flow from the same source, are directed to the same end, and all claim from the historian the benefit of toleration.

What Mr. Bancroft has done for the Colonial history is, after all, but preparation for a richer theme, the history of the War of Independence; a subject which finds its origin in the remote past, its results in the infinite future; which finds a central point of unity in the ennobling principle of independence, that gives dignity and grandeur to the most petty details of the conflict; and which has its foreground occupied by a single character, to which all others converge, as to a centre, — the character of Washington, in war, in peace, and in private life, the most sublime on historical record. Happy the writer who shall exhibit this theme worthily to the eyes of his countrymen!

The subject, it is understood, is to engage the attention, also, of Mr. Sparks, whose honorable labors have already associated his name imperishably with our Revolutionary period. Let it not be feared, that there is not compass enough in the subject for two minds so gifted. The field is too rich to be exhausted by a single crop, and will yield fresh laurels to the skilful hand that shall toil for them. The labors of Hume did not supersede those of Lingard, or Turner, or Mackintosh, or Hallam. The history of the English Revolution has called forth, in our own time, the admirable essays of Mackintosh and Guizot; and the palm of excellence, after the libraries that have been written on the French Rev-

olution, has just been assigned to the dissimilar histories of Mignet and Thiers. The points of view, under which a thing may be contemplated, are as diversified as mind itself. The most honest inquirers after truth rarely come to precisely the same results, such is the influence of education, prejudice, principle. Truth, indeed, is single, but opinions are infinitely various ; and it is only by comparing these opinions together, that we can hope to ascertain what is truth.

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ART. V. — *Elementary Geology*. By EDWARD HITCHCOCK, Professor of Chemistry and Natural History in Amherst College, and Geologist to the State of Massachusetts. Amherst : J. S. & C. Adams. 1840. 12mo. pp. 320.

AN extract from the Preface of the work before us, will best show the objects which its author proposes to accomplish.

“ 1. It is arranged in the form of distinct propositions or principles, with definitions and proofs ; and the inferences follow those principles on which they are mainly dependent. 2. An attempt has been made to present the whole subject in its proper proportions, viz. its facts, theories, and hypotheses, with their historical and religious relations, and a sketch of the geology of all the countries of the globe that have been explored. 3. It is made more American than republications from European writers, by introducing a greater amount of our geology. 4. It contains copious references to writers, where the different points, here briefly discussed, may be found amply treated. 5. It contains a *Palæontological Chart*, whose object is to bring under a glance of the eye the leading facts respecting organic remains.”

These are excellent traits in an elementary treatise on geology ; and, however slightly acquainted with the science, a reader cannot fail to perceive that it is here presented not only in a new but in a very attractive form, enabling the author to condense into a convenient compass, the vast amount of facts accumulated by his own personal observation, or derived from an extensive and minute knowledge of the labors